

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board Meeting

April 10, 2014

Conference Room 2A02, Cathcart Way Operations Center

Meeting called to order at 10:30 by Chairman John Tellesbo

Board Members Present

John Tellesbo

Ed Stocker

Dick Barr

Others Present

Warren Garrett – Road Maintenance Supervisor

Sonny Gohrman - Coordinator

Geraldine Saw – Lead Technician

Approval of minutes from March 13, 2014

Sonny commented that the original wording under the PDS / Code Enforcement discussion in the March minutes was incorrect and was corrected as highlighted. Dick made the motion to approve the March minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Ed. Motion passed.

Coordinators Report

Sonny attended the Coordinators Conference and State Weed Board meeting at Campbell's in Chelan. He met at least 6 new coordinators. There was a great presentation on bees and pesticide and the speaker is available for other events. The speaker works for WSDA and is a bee keeper. He really doesn't feel that most of the herbicides are an issue for bees. The concern is some of our noxious weeds are used for forage for the bees. Noxious weed education has been included in the WSDA organic license program and is sent with the yearly application. The State Weed Board is going to examine some county programs in regards to RCW 17.10. These counties are having changes made in regards to their Boards and are not allowed to fully execute RCW 17.10. The Forest Service has had a 50% turnover of its senior staff for the last 3 year. The new Milestone labeling has an 18 month waiting period after using Milestone before moving hay, straw or manure off site. John asked about moving soil after using Milestone. Sonny said it depends on where the soil is moved to, but as long the soil is not used for gardening or in compost it shouldn't be a problem. Ed asked about other herbicides besides Milestone for pasture use. Sonny recommended 2,4-D and Crossbow.

Staff has been cutting dead knotweed stems to clear the site for a second treatment at Twin Rivers Park. We will try to get a WCC crew from Scott Moore for a day in exchange for the use of one of our crews later. Scott's WCC crew is currently working at the Oso slide.

We have applied for the aquatic noxious weed NPDES spray permit. The permit is in process and we should have it back before we need it. Sonny and Gerry have applied for the Federal EPA commercial applicator license for RUP applications on the Tulalip Reservation. Sonny has received his license.

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We are working with SWM at the Nakashima site to spray reed canary grass for a restoration project. We will get our big boom sprayer fixed using the funds from this project which is not part of our budget. Sonny tried to GPS the area, but it was too wet.

Sonny attended the Snohomish Conservation District (SCD) award event in Everett. He also gave a presentation to 50 – 60 people at the Evergreen Fly Fishing Club. He will be presenting at the Beach Watchers program and conducting a webinar for the WSU extension forestry class in on May 7th.

Gerry returned from vacation on March 25. She attended the Little Bear Creek CWMA meeting to get updates and what we can do to help this year. We surveyed the roads and stream crossing last year in the Little Bear Creek Basin. Gerry is putting together a tansy contact list in preparation for going out in the field and talking to owners. The plan is for Gerry and Janice to make property owner contacts. There are about 600 tansy owner sites, including 100 which had been phased out. Initial visits will be made using two people for safety purposes. On the second visit occurring in August one person will return to do the follow-up. If there is no tansy after 2 years, the property can be removed from the list. After records have been updated a tansy mailer will be sent next year like we have done in the past. The records just got so old the mailer was not effective.

Sonny did an interesting interview with a University of Victoria student team working on a Spartina project in BC. We will get a copy of the report. Sonny and Gerry attended a meeting at the Jackson Project with PUD. They have a good control program and do everything within the watershed either mechanically or with vinegar. This a good opportunity to see how non-herbicide control works when applied in a consistent manner.

We are working on mapping the areas affected by the slide in Oso. This has the potential for being a very large knotweed issue because of the amount of knotweed at Steelhead Haven, but it is not a top priority with the current situation. Staff needs to be very aware of contacting owners who have lost friends and relatives. We will be cautious in our contact with cooperators in the Oso area and upstream from the slide. There are a number of owners that we have as cooperators in the area and we need to be as sensitive as possible. There are at least 3 of our cooperators that lost their lives in the slide.

We have start spraying for poison hemlock and tansy. Sonny is working on poison hemlock control in the Stanwood area. Road Maintenance gave the ok to spray beyond the roadside if the weeds are going to affect the roads. Gerry has sprayed for wild chervil near Dagmar's and for tansy ragwort in the Lake Stevens area.

We interviewed 11 seasonal candidates. 3 will start as soon as possible and 1 will start June 1st. John asked if they have pesticide license. Sonny said that 2 of the seasonal have license and the third will get his.

We haven't spent enough year to date to have a big impact on the budget. When our seasonals come on the spending will increase. Sonny passed out a budget recap showing project spending through March. We contacted the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Recovery Forum to express our intentions to apply for a SRFB grant for the Pilchuck Basin. We received an email back and the forum had some questions similar to the ones that were addressed last year in the process of getting the SRFB grant for the Stillaguamish grant. They have ranked the knotweed project low because of other priority projects. Without our request there are \$1.2 million in

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requests and only \$700,000 available. We will not apply for the grant this year, but we will work with the committee to answer questions and keep the topic of knotweed alive for the Forum. We will apply for the grant next year.

The program received a \$50,000 NEP grant through the Department of Ecology. The grant is through a SWM proposal for the Braided Reach Project on the Skykomish River. The NEP grant will fund a helicopter video survey, analysis of the video, and some level of ground truthing to document knotweed in the Skykomish River.

Old Business

Board Members for District 2 and 3

Don Tillman has applied for the District 2 position. His written application needs a little work and Sonny will meet with Don to improve on his application. Don will be attending the next meeting in May. Ed made the motion to accept Don Tillman as a board member for District 2. Dick seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed. John mentioned that we are still looking for a member in District 3 which covers areas between Granite Falls to Lake Stevens.

Action item: Sonny will talk to Don Tillman

PDS work with Weed Board on enforcement issues (update)

John emailed Will today and is waiting for a reply. The last they spoke, it was understood that PDS would provide a statement on how they want to be involved. John recommended that everyone should meet in person instead of emailing back and forth. After the last time John had spoken to Will, the Oso slide happened and other priorities took over. It has been 3 weeks and John will ask Will if he can get the process moving. A discussion on liens and enforcement ensued. John requested Sonny compose a step by step procedure from the first visit and carrying through to an enforcement.

Action item: John will follow-up with Will on getting a meeting set-up with attorney.

Action item Sonny will write a step by step procedure from the beginning of the first visit.

New Business

State Bio-control program support

Sonny handed out copies of a memorandum of agreement (MOA) as an example between WSU and King County. Sonny proposed providing \$1000 to the State Bio-control program to support what they do. The program researches bio-control on weeds and does field collection. Sonny reminded the Board that Snohomish County is one of two sites in the state that a bio-control for knotweed will be introduced. This comes from the research done to find the organism, in which the approval to release is a long and difficult process. We get the benefit of the research and we will be receiving the bio-control free of charge. As with all bio-control it depends on supply and demand. We have been buying bio-control agents in the past and this year our supplier could not provide all of the galerucella beetles we ordered. \$1000 is available since we are not purchasing all the galerucella beetles. John is impressed with the bio-controls as one of the weed management tools. He had received phone calls from anti-pesticide coalitions and he is able to explain to them that not all weed control uses herbicide. Dick made the motion to

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provide \$1000 to the WSU integrated weed control bio-control program. Ed seconded the motion.

Action item: Sonny will figure out the procedure to get the support funding to the WSU Bio program.

Preliminary planning for the 2015 budget

Sonny reported that there will be no new grants going into next year and the current grants will be almost spent out the end of the year. The NEP grant will have some funding left next year, but not much. The Spartina contract and the WSDA knotweed grants are dependent on the legislature approving a budget next year that includes the funding. The knotweed SRFB grant ends December of this year. The WSDA Pilchuck and Stillaguamish grants were two year grants. We will apply for the SRFB grant next year for the Pilchuck using WSDA grant as match. We will need to ask the county for more money next year and have a budget ready by June. We need to come up with a preliminary budget before the next board meeting. John suggested asking for twice what we got for this year. We received half of what was requested for this year's budget and we can seek the same figures again. Sonny said that Road Maintenance has been good and gave us a \$20,000 increase. John suggested Sonny copy and paste what we asked for last year.

Action item: Sonny to prepare the 2015 budget using 2014 figures as template.

Other Business

Changes in 2014 Noxious Weed List

The State Weed Board is looking for input on what to add or take off the weed list till the end of the month. Proposals will be reviewed at the state level in this yearly process. Sonny stated that in the past, we have talked about taking bull and Canada thistle off the list since they have become more nuisance weeds than real problems on agriculture lands. Sonny recommended adding butterfly bush and yellow flag iris to our list. Butterfly bush has the potential of becoming the Scotch Broom of the future according to Katherine Hovanic from Washington Native Plant Society. Butterfly bush is listed as a Class C on the State list. Yellow flag iris is becoming a big problem in our lakes, wetlands, and back channel riparian areas.

John mentioned that the next meeting is scheduled for May 8th.

Ed moved to adjourn, motion seconded by Dick.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00

Respectfully submitted by Geraldine Saw and Sonny Gohrman.

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